

# Business & Technology Update



Friday, September 25, 2020 | [coop.com](http://coop.com) | [BTS Portfolio](#) | [Contact](#) | [Archive](#) |

## Webinar: Measuring Co-op Response to COVID-19: Key Take-Aways and Action Items

NRECA and Touchstone Energy® recently conducted a national COVID-19 Response Survey of electric cooperative consumer members, measuring local co-op response to COVID-19 compared to other local organizations and member expectations of the co-op during the recovery. This new On Demand webinar provides highlights of the survey results, including national and regional insights, communication strategies, comparison with past surveys, and perspective on broader market trends and consumer expectations. NRECA also offers a DIY survey for co-ops who would like to conduct a similar survey for their own members and be able to benchmark their results to the national results.

- [Webinar](#)
- [Report](#)
- Contact: [Mike Sassman](#)

## Register Now for 2020 CyberSEEC National Virtual Cybersecurity Tabletop Exercise

**On October 29**, NRECA is partnering with NUARI to host **2020 CyberSEEC** (Cyber Security Exercises for Electric Communities) as part of National Cybersecurity Awareness Month. CyberSEEC is a free virtual cybersecurity exercise that allows co-ops to test their cybersecurity incident response. Each co-op will enter a team of at least three staff to work through the exercise in their own private online room. Individuals participate virtually from their own computers and teams do not need to physically assemble together. Afterwards, your co-op will receive a spreadsheet documenting your responses. **Registration deadline: October 16.**

- [More Information and Registration](#)
- Contact: [Cynthia Hsu](#)

## How Collaboration is Essential as DER Growth Heightens

The increased adoption of distributed energy resources (DERs) is driving change in the industry and causing some G&Ts to evaluate their traditional way of doing business with their members. This new advisory reviews insights gained through recent NRECA surveys regarding how G&Ts perceive the current and potential levels of DER, and highlights the value of collaboration between G&Ts and their distribution cooperatives in planning for grid impacts from increasing DER and in helping to adapt to evolving NERC reliability interest in this arena.

- **Advisory**
- **Contacts:** [Paul McCurley](#) and [Patti Metro](#)

## Podcast: What is the Beneficial Electrification League?

The **beneficial electrification** movement — using electricity to replace fossil fuels for everything from mowing your lawn to powering your car — has gained momentum and led to the formation of the *Beneficial Electrification League*. The League's mission is to increase understanding of electrification's economic, consumer and environmental benefits. In the latest episode of *Along Those Lines*, hear from the Beneficial Electrification League's co-chair, Gary Connett, formerly of Great River Energy, and Tri-State G&T CEO Duane Highley, who heads the League's Colorado chapter, about their goals for the group and how co-ops are getting involved.

- **Podcast**
- **Contact:** [Keith Dennis](#)

## Next “Future Of...” Webinar: Learn about Turning Data into Action and Earn CEUs

Join us for our next “Future Of...” webinar “Turning Your Data Into Action” on **Tuesday, Sept. 29, 2-3 p.m. ET**. Our experts will review important data types to capture to meet your operational goal, data platforms available to co-ops, and how to visualize information using the latest technologies. We will also share information on new research being done at NRECA with national labs and electric co-ops that is working to create additional tools for improved data analytics. **Registration is free. Engineers can earn CEUs, if you register and attend the live event.**

- **More Information & Registration**
- **Contact:** [Robbin Christianson](#)

## Latest Version of MultiSpeak Brings Additional System Integration Benefits for Co-ops

The newest version of MultiSpeak®, Version 5, is now available for cooperatives, bringing a modern definition of interoperability that comes closer to “Plug & Play” than ever before. Based on actual business processes, Version 5 includes a new Testing & Certification process to help ensure that products you buy will integrate well into your existing infrastructure. In addition, Guide Specifications are available to include in your purchasing documents to clearly define function set requirements for prospective vendors. Look for the new “digital badges” on system products as indication that they have been tested and certified to MultiSpeak Version 5 business processes.

- **More Information**
- **Contact:** [Tony Thomas](#)

## Final Opportunity to Participate in the RC3 Online Cybersecurity Self-Assessment

More than 480 of NRECA's member cooperatives are participating in the RC3 Online Cybersecurity Self-Assessment program to learn about their current cybersecurity posture and make action plans for further improvements. The final round for applications to participate is now open and available to all NRECA member co-ops. **The application deadline is October 16.** Learn more on our RC3 website, including training webinars to help co-ops complete the RC3 Online Self-Assessment with insights from participants. **The Self-Assessment can be used virtually and does not require staff to assemble in the same location.**

- [Advisory](#)
- [RC3 Self-Assessment Website](#)
- [Instructional Webinar Series - On Demand](#)
- [Contacts: Cynthia Hsu and Valerie Sayd](#)

## Microgrids with Energy Storage Case Studies and Best Practices

Microgrids have the potential to help utilities and their customers by mitigating long-term outages from extreme weather events, providing grid services, and improving reliability. Improved performance and decreasing costs for distributed energy technologies have resulted in increased microgrid deployments, many of which are beginning to incorporate energy storage. This article, the third and final in our series based on the CEATI report: *Integration and Coordination of Energy Storage within Microgrids*, highlights the experiences of the Santa Rita Jail and Ocracoke Island, and provides best practices for implementing energy storage within microgrids.

- [Article](#)
- [Website for Series](#)
- [Contacts: Dan Walsh and Jan Ahlen](#)

## NRECA Expands Consulting Services to Benefit Cooperatives

Recognizing that technology and the people behind it go hand-in-hand, NRECA's Business and Technology Strategies group has added a suite of consulting services to our portfolio of work. In addition to the existing consulting services focused on management, executive search, safety, governance and similar topics, we have now added consulting services focused on assisting cooperatives address challenges with the integrated grid, including technology and data strategy planning, organization and operations analysis, UAS training, and more. **Now, during budget planning season, is a key time for cooperatives to consider how these services can help you achieve your goals.** Find out further details in this advisory:

- [Advisory](#)
- [Contacts: Venkat Banunarayanan and Ginny Beauchemin](#)

## New Report Outlines the Impact of COVID-19 on the Economy

## in Rural America

NRECA economists and RE Advisers portfolio managers have published *Mid-Year 2020 U.S. Economic Outlook: A Focus on Rural America*, a new report that outlines the impact of COVID-19 on rural electric cooperatives and examines several issues likely to play a major role in shaping the economic health of the communities they serve. Insights are paired with a broad view of the health of the U.S. economy overall and portfolio management perspectives from RE Advisers.

- **Report**
- Contacts:
  - Report: [Joe Goodenbery](#)
  - Portfolio Management Perspective: [Dima Awamleh](#)

## Compensation Planning Assistance for Co-ops

Salary budget planning? We can help. The [National Compensation System](#) is the most comprehensive distribution electric cooperative salary benchmarking tool available, with data contributed from nearly 800 distribution systems. For more hands-on assistance in developing or redesigning your compensation model, our [compensation experts](#) are available to provide a customized proposal based on your [answers to a few questions](#).

- **Our Compensation Model and Its Benefits**
- **On-Demand Webinar:** *Aligning Compensation with Your Business Strategy*
- Contact: [Delaine Orendorff](#)

## NRECA Subgroup Develops Go-To Guide for Affordable Clean Energy Rule

The Affordable Clean Energy (ACE) rule, which was finalized in mid-2019, replaced the controversial 2015 Clean Power Plan (CPP). But without clear direction from the EPA on compliance after ACE went into effect, NRECA and its member generation and transmission cooperatives worked tirelessly to create a guidance report for their peers. This new *RE Magazine* article looks at how the ACE Implementation Subgroup of NRECA's Environmental Policy Council ended up writing the 'go-to' guide for the entire power sector and state regulators.

- **Article**
- Contact: [Dan Chartier](#)

## Collaborative Project Aims to Predict Solar Adoption

The SEEDS II project is a Department of Energy (DOE)-funded collaborative project with the University of Virginia (UVA) and electric cooperatives focused on estimating the probability of an individual household to adopt rooftop solar, based on demographics, social characteristics, and behavioral characteristics. Through this three-year project, two models are now in prototype and are hopeful to provide insights to co-ops in the future. This advisory provides further details:

- **Advisory**
- Contact: Maria Kanevsky

## WEBINAR AND PODCAST OPPORTUNITIES

### Podcasts:

- **What is the Beneficial Electrification League?**

### Webinars:

#### Future Of... Volume 2 Series

- **Analytics: The “Future Of” Turning Your Data in Action**  
September 29, 2-3 PM ET
- **Situational Awareness: The “Future Of” Distribution Operations**  
October 6, 2-3 PM ET
- **UAS: The “Future Of” Measurement and Monitoring**  
On Demand

### On Demand Webinars:

- **Measuring Co-op Response to COVID-19: Key Take-Aways and Action Items**
- **Aligning Compensation with Your Business Strategy**
- **Broadband as an Essential Service**
- **DOE Wind Energy Webinar**
- **Future Of... Volume 1 Series**
- **RC3 Online Cybersecurity Self-Assessment Program**
- **Impacts of COVID-19 on Renewable Energy and Storage Development**
- **Impacts of Postponing or Canceling Annual Meetings and Director Elections due to COVID-19**
- **Integrated Vegetation Management (IVM)**
- **Series: Mitigating Bird Issues**

## Additional Resources Regarding the Impact of COVID-19 on Co-ops

NRECA has recently completed several analyses on the impact of COVID-19 on electric cooperatives, including

economic, job sectors, and broadband. Below are links:

- **Measuring Co-op Response to COVID-19: Key Take-Aways and Action Items**  
Contact: Mike Sassman
- **Report: Mid-Year 2020 U.S. Economic Outlook: A Focus on Rural America**  
Contact: Joe Goodenbery
- **Paycheck Protection Program: Loan Forgiveness**  
Contacts: Allison Hamilton and Joe Goodenbery
- **Financial Impact Report**  
Contacts: Russell Tucker and Joe Goodenbery
- **Financial Impact and Pathways to Relief**  
Contact: Allison Hamilton
- **At Risk Job Sectors Report**  
Contact: Michael Leitman
- **Impacts on Generation and Transmission Cooperatives**  
Contacts: Lauren Khair and Michael Leitman
- **How COVID-19 Is Impacting Electricity Industry Sectors**  
Contacts: Lauren Khair and Michael Leitman
- **Tools to Help Manage Energy Expenses**  
Contact: Brian Sloboda
- **The Criticality of Broadband**  
Contact: Paul Breakman
- **Business and Technology Resources to Use Virtually**
- **NRECA COVID-19 Hub**
- **Special Edition: Business and Technology Update**

See past issues of *Business and Technology Update* in our [archive on cooperative.com](#).

**Discover the value of NRECA membership. Learn more.**

This is a promotion from the National Rural Electric Cooperative Association  
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